



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

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Contact: Laura Hayes
202-224-4515

Baucus Hails Signing of Medicare Prescription Drug Legislation *Senator Played Leading Role in Drafting Legislation*

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) U.S. Senator Max Baucus today joined President Bush and leading members of the Senate and House at the signing of the \$395 billion Medicare prescription drug legislation.

As ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, Baucus played a lead role throughout the creation of the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act, including being a key participant in the House-Senate Medicare conference committee negotiations.

Baucus issued the following statement today after the President's signing of the Medicare prescription drug bill into law:

"I am honored to have joined President Bush at the signing of this remarkable Medicare prescription drug benefit legislation. I am also honored to have been accompanied by my Senate and House colleagues who helped to make this day possible, especially Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, Senator John Breaux, and Majority Leader Bill Frist.

Today is a historic day for our nation's seniors, for our future Medicare beneficiaries, and for the landmark achievements that can be accomplished by working together. For the first time in our nation's history, seniors will have access to assistance with the high costs of prescription drugs. They will no longer have to choose between food and medicine because the medications they need are too expensive. And they will have better access to preventative medicine to help them live longer and better lives.

A nation's character can be determined by the way they take care of their elderly population. In 1965, our nation took the important, care giving step of providing health care to our seniors through Medicare. And today we took the vitally necessary step of helping seniors with access to the prescription drugs they need.

I am proud and honored to have been part of writing, negotiating, and passing of the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act. I am also proud that we did not allow this opportunity to pass us by. With \$400 billion on the table for a prescription drug benefit it was imperative that we enact this bill into law this year.

I look forward to seeing the positive impacts this legislation will have on the health care of our nation's seniors in the years to come.

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